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Application No. 10/529,172
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REMARKS

The Office Action of December 6, 2006 was received and carefully reviewed. The Examiner is thanked for reviewing this application.

Claims 1-35 were pending prior to the instant amendment. By this amendment, claims 8, 28 and 30 have been amended. Claims 1-7, 9, 10, 15, 26, 27, 29 and 35 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 8, 11-14, 16-25, 28 and 30-34 are pending, of which claims 8, 16 and 28 are independent. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims.

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter with respect to claims 10, 16-25, 29, 30 and 33.

Claims 15, 26 and 35 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. In view of the above amendment, Applicants respectfully request that this objection be removed.

Claims 1-7 and 28-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In view of the above amendment, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 2 and 4-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Martin et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,053,491 – hereafter Martin). Further, claims 1, 3, 8 and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Palmteer (U.S. Patent No. 6,781,065 – hereafter Palmteer). Still further, claims 8 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ichida et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,518,667 hereafter Ichida). Still yet further, claims 8, 9 and 12-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Martin in view of Palmteer. Finally, claims 28, 31, 32 and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Martin in view of Abbott et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,337,445 – hereafter Abbott).

With respect to independent claim 8, Applicants' amendment recites, *inter alia*, the feature indicated as allowable of claim 10, "wherein the step of forming the plating layer includes the step of forming an additional plating layer including Ag." Applicants contend that this feature is not taught or disclosed by Martin, Palmteer, or Ichida as

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presently recited in the claimed combinations of features. Hence, Applicants respectfully submit that at least independent claim 8 as presently claimed is not anticipated by the Martin, Palmteer, or Ichida.

With respect to independent claim 28, Applicants' amendment recites, *inter alia*, the feature indicated as allowable of claim 29, "wherein the solder layer further includes a second solder layer, which is provided so as to wrap up the first solder layer, and wherein the second solder layer includes Ag and has a thickness of at most 0.5 μ m." Applicants contend that this feature is not taught or suggested by the combination of Martin and Abbott as presently recited in the claimed combinations of features. Hence, Applicants respectfully submit that at least independent claim 28 as presently claimed is not made obvious by the Martin in combination with Abbott.

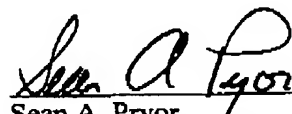
Claims 11-14 depend from independent claim 8 and are patentable over the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 8.

Claims 30-34 depend from independent claim 28 and are patentable over the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 28.

In addition, each of these dependent claims also recite combinations that are separately patentable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of record be reconsidered and withdrawn by the Examiner, that claims 8, 11-14, 16-25, 28 and 30-34 be allowed and that the application be passed to issue. If a conference would expedite prosecution of the instant application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned to arrange such a conference.

Respectfully submitted,


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